

Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup> 2022

To the Honorable Chairs Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am writing **IN SUPPORT** of:

- [S.B. No. 387](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.
- [S.B. No. 392](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

I am writing **IN STRONG OPPOSITION** to the following bills:

- [S.B. No. 365](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS
- S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.
- [H.B. No. 5418](#) AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE
- [H.B. No. 5417](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS BACKGROUND CHECKS.
- [S.B. No. 386](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE.
- [S.B. No. 16](#) AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

My name is Andi Fliegel. I am a resident of West Hartford and a rabbi at Congregation Beth Israel in West Hartford, CT. My congregation is a proud member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA). As a society, we should be investing in the health, education, and general well-being of all of our youth. We all want to feel safe in our homes and when living our daily lives around town. As a mom often driving with my two young children, I can certainly understand the fear that is evoked from rhetoric around a false rise in crime. We do all know of scary car jackings some of our neighbors have experienced. And yet, the response to that fear is not to over embellish their rising frequency and manipulate voters into supporting policies that will endanger large portions of black and brown youth. The above bills will lead to greater numbers of black and brown youth being detained, coming under surveillance, allow for a mere 14 year old to be charged as an adult, in addition to many other harmful and dangerous practices.

Alternatively, the Juvenile Justice System in Connecticut has been largely successful. It follows best practices. Legislative changes are made based on facts and data. Legislation derived from the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (which is why I support SB 387) is open to discussion and voting by members including state legislators, prosecutors, public defenders, state agencies, judges, police, state advocates, victim advocates, community-based organizations, adults and youth. Connecticut has been a model in the country on how to successfully and safely reduce the juvenile justice system and expand diversion and services for youth. The legislation I oppose today is a departure from these practices.

I oppose such juvenile reform bills created out of manufactured fear that lack a basis in data or the best interest of all youth in the state of Connecticut.

GHIAA stands ready to defeat policies that are rooted in racist rhetoric and faulty data. To learn more watch this 7 minute video on GHIAA's position: <https://vimeo.com/686784926>

Sincerely,

Rabbi Andi Fliegel  
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